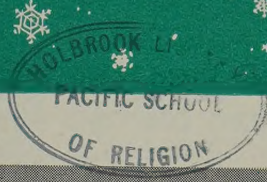


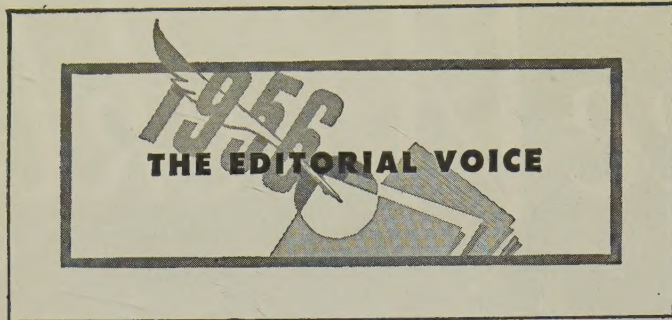
the Alliance Weekly

DECEMBER 19, 1956



ONG ROBERTS

★ ★ ★ Merry Christmas ★ ★ ★



ROOT OUT OF A DRY GROUND

One of the most beautiful descriptions of our Saviour to be found anywhere is that given by Isaiah in the fifty-third chapter of his prophecy: "For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground."

Those who have at any time been close to the soil will see at once a young shoot just pushing through the ground and will feel the exquisite precision of the word "tender" when applied to it. The delicate sprout appears to be mostly water, held together one scarcely knows how, and so brittle that it will snap asunder at the slightest touch. Only after the passing of several days does it toughen up enough to endure external pressure without damage.

While a newborn babe is not as fragile as the tender plant just emerged from the soil, the likeness is too plain to miss, and the prophet spoke well when he compared the one to the other. The helpless, crying human thing is vulnerable from a thousand directions and is wholly dependent for its very life upon parents, neighbors and friends. No one can pick up a day-old baby and not sense the pathetic frailty of it—a barely-conscious blob of sweet, perishable life only now arrived from the ancient void of nonexistence.

So our Lord came to the manger in Bethlehem that first Christmas morning, not out of nonexistence, but from eternal pre-existence; not as a son of man only but as Son of Man and Son of God in the fullest sense of both terms; a tender plant and a root out of a dry ground.

It is quite in keeping with the ways of God that He should make the hope of the world to hang upon something as weak as a new baby. A slip of the hand could have ended the newborn life. All around the Bethlehem manger flowed dark, destructive forces urged on by that ancient and unbelievably cruel dragon called the Devil and Satan. All were in black conspiracy to destroy the tender Man-child before He could offer Himself on an altar for the redemption of the world. From the natural viewpoint nothing could have been easier than to kill the Babe before He had learned to say "Father" or "Mother." No bodyguard had He, and the very soldiers that should have protected Him were sent to murder Him. The quiet and harmless Joseph could not save Him from the cold ferocity of the dragon, nor could the sweet young mother afford Him shelter from the

destructive power of an iron empire. Yet He lay complete security, safer in His frailty than if He had been surrounded by an army of a million men; safer than if He had been another Samson, able to slay one blow a thousand Philistines.

The prophet, with anointed foresight, saw our Lord as He was after He had emerged into human nature and called Him a tender plant; but he saw also His human origin, and this appeared to him, or at least appeared to us, more wonderful still: a root out of a dry ground.

Now everyone knows that moisture is necessary to the germination of seeds, to the swelling of buds and to the sprouting of the root buried there in the ground. Where there is no water life lies suspended in sleep in inaction. Even the desert plant must have a minimum quantity of moisture before there can be any growth at all. No slip of vegetable life has yet pushed up out of soil that was totally arid. No root has yet sprung out of the dry ground.

Yet Isaiah saw a tender plant grow out of ground where no moisture was; that is, he saw it in prophetic vision, and he knew a miracle was at work. Nature could not have wrought this wonder by herself. The arm of the Lord had done this, and let all the world marvel and be still. As certainly as the dry soil must remain barren, so must apostate Israel be fruitless, must a virgin maid be childless. No root could grow out of a dry ground.

The prophet had said before that His name should be called Wonderful; and His very first wonder was to be born above nature. We do not wish to read into Isaiah's strangely beautiful words meanings that are not there; but the believing heart that sees the Bible as an organic spiritual unit will have no trouble finding here the truth long held sacred by all Christians, the truth of the virgin birth.

Had Israel been like a young woman at the peak of her reproductive powers the rising of such a prodigy as Jesus from within her might have had some logic in it; but He was born of Israel when her powers had waned and her strength had withered. By no stretch of fancy could anyone who knew Israel in that day have visioned Jesus as her offspring. Israel was dead ground—politically, morally and spiritually effete. Only the few old saints who still remembered the story of Sarah and Isaac could yet hope. And perhaps even they laughed as Sarah had laughed, half in unbelief and half in expectation.

Whatever Christmas may be today, that first Christmas was the celebration of a miracle. A root had come out of a dry ground.

The entire staff joins in wishing all

A Very Happy Christmas



MEERKAMPER—MONKMEYER

Christ Is Christmas

By REV. ELIAS G. KARIM

DURING the Christmas season we hear again the familiar greetings, "Merry Christmas" or "Season's Greetings," and the reply, "Same to you." "Merry Christmas" is the only greeting most people have ever known for this particular holiday. And yet "Merry Christmas" does not express the full, beautiful meaning of the nativity of Christ, just as "Happy Easter" does not express the spirit of the resurrection.

More significant for this season is the greeting, "Christ is born!"* and the reply, "Glorify Him!" Without Christ there is no Christmas! In honoring Him we honor the giver of every good, the source of every blessing. In Christ we have the answers to all our many questions beginning with our home life, its joys, its sorrows, its problems. "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved" (John 3:17).

*The greeting, "Christ is Born! Glorify Him!" is one of the oldest known in Christmas tradition. It is always used by Christians of the Holy (Eastern) Orthodox Church, and is found in all Orthodox Church Prayer Books.

God, the second Person of the Holy Trinity, came to earth as a Babe, as the Lamb of God. But He did not remain a child. He grew to be the One who demonstrates Deity in action. It is this same Christ "who for us and for our salvation not only came down from heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man, but who was also crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, who on the third day rose again, according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of the Father, and who shall come again with glory to judge the quick and the dead!"—NICENE CREED.



Rev. Elias G. Karim is the pastor of the St. Nicholas Syrian Antiochian Orthodox Church in San Francisco, Calif. In the fall of 1955, he attended Bible classes in Simpson Bible College. The pressure of duties in his parish prevented his continuing his studies there, but he keeps in contact with the school and has a high regard for the quality of its Bible teaching.

To preserve the full significance of Christmas we should devote as much time as possible to learning more about the One whom the Christ Child grew to be. It is not enough to read, hear and sing about His wondrous birth in Bethlehem. His life as a unique whole claims our attention.

Starting with His birth, continue on with His whole life's story. . . . "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11) who gave His own life for all of us and who comes back in the hearts of all who love and call upon Him.

During the Christmas rush there are colorful advertisements, pictures, stories, music and Christmas cards galore. Santa Claus and his reindeer are featured prominently, together with toys, striped Christmas candy, snow men, cute animals with bright-colored bows about their necks, and many varied decorations resembling everything from bells to snowflakes. The greatest stress during Christmas is put on gifts from Santa Claus and

too little emphasis on our blessed Lord, the One whose birthday it is.

The custom of exchanging gifts at Christmas had its start at the birth of Christ. The shepherds are said to have offered the first gifts to the newborn Saviour. We know from the Gospel account that the Magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should commemorate these events in our giving, for such giving can be symbolic of the greatest gift from God to mankind: the gift of His only begotten Son. Therefore, all gifts should be given in the same spirit as were the gifts of the shepherds and the Wise Men, and in order that our giving be in this spirit we should give in the name of the Christ Child.

Nicholas, whose feast day is celebrated annually on December 6, was devoted to children, and because of his many charitable and kind acts he became known as the patron saint of children, the type of a cheerful giver who expects nothing in return. In Europe—Holland, to be exact—Saint Nicholas is called *Sinterklaas*. It is this term which has gradually been anglicized to the popular Santa Claus. And because of his unselfish attitude “jolly old Saint Nick” is oftentimes called Father Christmas, the good spirit of Christmas personifying unselfishness and love towards others! All of this is interesting, but still in itself it is *not* Christmas.

To someone from a pagan land Christmas must appear to be a holiday primarily instituted by the department stores, having the unanimous endorsement of everyone. It is a time of buying sprees, everyone shopping for everyone else and accumulating more things they don't need or really want. Christmas appears to be the occasion for both children and grownups to get their annual supply of toys and presents “from Santa Claus.” Messages of good will are sent by the gross and the postal carrier becomes the bearer of good tidings. It is a season for the display of a festive spirit. To the foreigner Christmas seems to provide a very good opportunity for every kind of business.

For too many people, getting ready for Christmas means principally trimming an evergreen tree and decorating the home with colored lights, holly and other ornaments. Greeting cards are sent and presents exchanged. A festive dinner with special foods and pastries is an essential part of their merry time, whereas the central Personality of Christmastide, Christ the Lord, is all too often forgotten.

We read in the Epistle of James, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (1:17). What gift more fully reflects the spirit of Christmas than Christ Himself? Spiritual riches are infinite! “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16).

Through Christ we know the meaning of peace, brotherly love, hope and joy. He is the source of solace, of strength, of courage and of resurgent faith for a troubled world. What better, more lasting, gift can there be at Christmastide than Christ Himself?

Despite the many attempts to put Christ aside during the Christmas season, multitudes of the redeemed rejoice in celebrating His birth. In fact, few people are so lost that they cannot respond to the ever-thrilling story of the Christ Child who was born in a lowly manger. Because the story is true it is for-

His Birth

*The sky can still remember
The earliest Christmas morn,
When in the cold December
The Saviour Christ was born.
No star unfolds its glory,
No trumpet wind is blown,
But tells the Christmas story
In music of its own.*

*O never-failing splendor!
O never-silent song!
Still keep the green earth tender,
Still keep the gray earth strong,
Still keep the brave earth dreaming
Of deeds that shall be done,
While children's lives come streaming
Like sunbeams from the sun.*

*O angels sweet and splendid,
Throng in our hearts and sing
The wonders which attended
The coming of the King;
Till we too, boldly pressing
Where once the shepherds trod,
Climb Bethlehem's Hill of Blessing,
And find the Son of God.*

—PHILLIPS BROOKS.

ever beautiful. Our experience of Christ is that He comes unto the most lowly people even in this day and age. Once they know Him, even kings humbly bow the knee before Him. The most intellectual of people, as well as the least learned, join in paying Him homage.

At this season the air is filled with the traditional carols which proclaim the coming birthday of the Messiah. Once again is heard the beautiful stories of the Nativity. How very appropriate it is that we approach this most festive holiday with triumphant voices and uplifted hearts! How fitting that we should commemorate the nativity of our God by inviting friends and acquaintances into the peace of our lighted churches to partake of the spirit of this most sacred and festive season.

The sound of church bells, the ancient hymns, the carols and the songs awaken a wealth of tender associations and sentiments sacred to all who come together in the fellowship of Christ. Even unbelievers are filled with awe at the thought of God's gift of love. At the significance of the wondrous event that took place in Bethlehem in the long ago becomes clearer. Christmas Day is truly filled with radiant hope, the promise of a future crowned with victory, glory and honor.

VOLUME 91 NUMBER 51

the Alliance Weekly

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF
THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

A. B. SIMPSON, *Founder*
H. M. SHUMAN, *President-Emeritus*
HARRY L. TURNER, *President*
NATHAN BAILEY, *Vice-President*
WILLIAM F. SMALLEY, *Secretary*
BERNARD S. KING, *Treasurer*

A. W. TOZER, *Editor*
CHARLES E. NOTSON, *Assistant Editor*
ANITA M. BAILEY, *Managing Editor*

Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at Harrisburg, Pa. Published weekly by Christian Publications, Inc.

Subscriptions: United States and Canada, \$2.00; Foreign, \$2.75. Address correspondence on editorial matters to THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY, 260 W. 44th St., New York 36, N. Y.; regarding subscriptions, Third and Reily Sts., Harrisburg, Pa.

When requesting change of address kindly give both old and new address to insure proper mailing. (Printed in U. S. A.)

God's Presence

Distinguishes His Own People

A SERMON

By EDWARD PAYSON, D.D.

"If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth" (Ex. 33:15, 16).

THE Israelites made and worshiped a golden calf. This sin would have been punished by their immediate destruction had not the intercession of Moses prevailed to obtain a pardon. God forbore to destroy the offenders but saw it necessary to manifest His displeasure by withdrawing His gracious Presence, commanding the Tabernacle, which was its symbol, to be removed without the camp. At the same time He intimated that He should no longer continue to go with them as He had done. However, this was not expressed in such a manner as to forbid all hope of its being reversed, and therefore Moses felt encouraged to plead that God would graciously condescend to accompany them as formerly.

That we may perceive the pertinency and force of this plea we must realize that God had expressed a determination to make the Israelites a peculiar people unto Himself and as such to separate and keep them separate from all other nations. Now this, Moses pleaded, could not be effected unless they continued to be favored with the manifested and gracious presence of their God.

The Scriptures teach that Christ gave Himself for us to purify unto Himself a peculiar people who should be different and separate from all other men. They teach us that He requires all who would be His disciples to come out from

among unbelievers and be separate; that His disciples are not of the world even as He was not of the world, and that if any man be a real Christian, he is a new creature. He has new dispositions, new views, new feelings, new desires, new objects of pursuit; in one word, a character essentially different from that which he originally possessed and from that of other men.

Thus a well defined line of distinction is drawn between the true disciples of Christ and the rest of mankind, analogous to that line which separated the Israelites from the heathen nations around them. And as God gave a promise to His ancient people Israel that His presence should go with them, so He has given His church many promises that His manifested and gracious presence shall attend all the true

disciples of Christ during their pilgrimage through the world.

Nothing but this promised presence of God with His people can effectually separate them from others; nothing else can preserve that broad line of distinction which separates real Christians from the unbelieving world. A realizing apprehension of the constant presence of God must produce a wide difference and ultimately a separation, not always local indeed, but moral. The difference and separation will be still more evident when the Father and the Son come, in harmony with the promise, to reside in a man's heart and favor him with their gracious presence. The occurrence of such an event, the entrance of such Guests into the heart, will be followed by a great change in a man's views, feelings and character. Of those who are thus favored God Himself says, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God and they shall be my people."

Let a man of taste come to occupy a house and garden which had long been neglected, and an alteration will soon be perceived in them. Much more may we expect that a similar alteration will be effected in the soul when the wonder-working God comes to reside in it. He is the Father of lights, the Sun of righteousness; and whenever He comes to dwell He brings with Him and diffuses around Him a portion of His celestial radiance. He causes the soul which He inhabits to see the light of the knowledge of His own glory in the face of Jesus Christ. The view which is thus given to



the soul, of God's ineffable glory and beauty, enables it to perceive the justice of His claims to the supreme love and undivided homage of all His intelligent creatures.

The Lord, we are assured, is a jealous God. He will not endure a rival. The idol Dagon fell before the Ark of God, the symbol of Jehovah's presence, when it was brought into Dagon's temple; our Saviour scourged out the buyers and sellers from the Temple at Jerusalem when He entered it. Much more may we expect that when He comes into the human heart and makes it His temple, its former idols, its beloved sins, its domineering lusts will be moved and overthrown and a great moral purification be effected. In fine, He renews the soul after His own image in knowledge and true holiness and thus makes the man a new creature, a partaker of the divine nature, producing a wide moral separation between those who are subjects of it and all other men.

God is the Sun of the intellectual and moral world, the Sun of the soul. And He can shine into it and render it luminous and happy. When He favors it with His presence and exerts upon it His influence, it is enlivened and enlightened and made to glow with love and hope and joy and gratitude. But when He withdraws and suspends His influences, spiritual darkness and coldness are the consequence. Then it is night; it is winter with the soul. In proportion as He thus withdraws from His people they cease to view Him as a present reality. And in proportion as they cease to regard Him as a present reality, they cease to have those views and exercise those affections which constitute the grand essential difference between them and other men.

Nor is this all. As holy affections decline, sinful affections revive. As the Creator sinks out of sight, creatures begin again to be regarded with an idolatrous attachment. Hence the Christian becomes more and more worldly-minded, more and more conformed to the world, and his distinctive separateness becomes like Samson after the Spirit of God had withdrawn from him, weak and ineffectual. Nor will anything raise him from this wretched state until

The name of Edward Payson has become familiar to ALLIANCE WEEKLY readers. He was born at Rindge, N. H., in 1783, the son of Rev. Seth Payson, pastor of the Congregational Church. He graduated from Harvard in 1803, studied divinity under his father for three years and was settled over the second parish church (Congregational) in 1808 at Portland, Me., where he remained until his death nineteen years later. He refused calls to larger churches in New York and Boston. His beautiful character and the spirituality of his preaching made a profound impression upon the people, and so great was his reputation for saintliness that scores of children were named after him. His sermons, published in 1859 in three volumes, were widely circulated both in America and Great Britain.



he is again favored with the presence of God. It is then the peculiar presence of God with His people, and nothing else, which produces and maintains a difference and separation between them and other men.

If you are not certain whether you have the presence of God or not, let me ask you, are you walking with God? Is there a moral difference and separation between you and the world? Are you constrained to obey the call which says, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters"? If your experience has not, to some degree at least, produced these effects, be assured that what you think is the presence of God is nothing but a delusion. Shall a man pretend to be the temple of the living God while his conduct proves that his heart is filled with idols and resembles a cage of unclean and hateful birds?

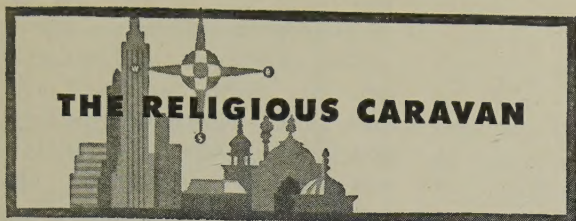
Let me inquire whether this church now enjoys the peculiar presence of God as it once appeared to do? And yet why do I ask? It is, alas, too evident that with but few exceptions we must feel that the presence of the Lord has been hidden from us. Do any ask for proofs of this assertion? Where, I ask in reply, is the broad line of distinction which once separated this church and an unbelieving world? Now if we are becoming like the world around us it is certain that God has to a de-

gree at least withdrawn His presence from us. And if He has withdrawn it, it is on account of our sins, for on no other account does He ever withdraw Himself from church. His own language is, "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face" (Hos. 5:15).

This language states the reason of His absence, how long it will continue and what we must do to procure His return. We must acknowledge, with unfeigned contrition, the sins which provoked His hiding His face from us, and with sincerity, earnestness and perseverance seek His presence. We have not been suitably affected by the loss of God's presence. We have been less affected by it than were the idolatrous Israelites themselves. We are informed in the context that when they heard of God's determination to withdraw from them and commit them to the guidance of an angel, they mourned. And shall we who call ourselves Christians be less affected by the loss of God's presence than were these perverse, stiff-necked idolaters? Rather let us imitate Moses, who pleaded importunately for this blessing and would take no denial. Let us all, as one man, cry with him, *Lord, let Thy presence go with us, so shall it be known that we have found favor in Thy sight; so shall Thy church be separated from the surrounding world and adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour in all things.*

My brethren, unless we do this our state will become worse and worse; we shall become more and more conformed to a sinful world, iniquities, offenses and divisions will abound till God shall come and remove our candlestick out of its place.

And let those who are still favored with His presence beware lest they lose it. Let them prize it above all other blessings and walk circumspectly and humbly with their God, remembering that He is a jealous God who will not bear a rival, and a holy God who will not tolerate sin even in His own people. Let them remember that the High and Holy One who inhabits eternity has said, "I dwell in the hearts of the humble and contrite." ♦ ♦ ♦



DAVID R. ENLOW, Editor

AT HOME

Bishops reject proposal for armed forces prelate: The House of Bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church, meeting at Pocono Manor, Pa., overwhelmingly defeated a proposal that it elect a bishop for the armed forces. Delegates opposing the proposal argued that the church has an American bishop in Europe (Bishop Norman B. Nash, retired, of Massachusetts), that it is too much to expect one man to oversee a world-wide jurisdiction, and that the resident bishop of an area where troops are concentrated can be of more value than a prelate assigned specifically to the armed forces.

Home for rehabilitation of alcoholics dedicated: The Harbor, Inc., a "home for Christian rehabilitation of alcoholics," was formally dedicated at LaGrange, Ga., after two months of operations. Modeled after The Anchorage, a similar institution at Albany, Ga.; Hebron, a Christian home for male alcoholics, and Grace Home for women alcoholics, both near Boone, N. C., the infant institution can accommodate ten persons. It has eight residents at present. "The Harbor is a work of God, not just some temporary thing for a man to set up and then cast aside," said Rev. George Fred Smith, superintendent.

ABROAD

Salvation Army opens Rome Hostel: Gen. Wilfred Kitching, world commander of the Salvation Army, formally inaugurated a Men's Hostel built by his organization in one of Rome's poorest districts. Among those attending the ceremony were, in addition to other Salvation Army officers, Italian Vice Premier Giuseppe Saragat, and the British and Canadian ambassadors to Italy. Gen. Kitching said "we deplore oppression and believe that, in the final estimate, love is more enduring than strife. So we must not despair."

Alaska Air Force choir wins contest: For the second successive year the chapel choir of Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska, won the United States Air Force choir contest. Second place went to the Bartow Air Force Base choir (Fla.) and third to Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa. The chapel choirs of Nagoya Air Force Base, Japan, and Turner Air Force Base, Georgia, won honorable mention. Maj. Gen. Charles I. Carpenter, chief of Air Force chaplains, announced the results of the contest which was inaugurated last year.

German Protestant mission personnel increasing: German evangelical foreign missionary personnel has increased from 180 to 754 since the end of World War II, Rev. Jan Hermelink, of Hamburg, secretary of the German Missionary Council, reported at Breklum, Germany. The clergyman said that during the past fifty years about 40,000,000 persons have been converted to Christianity through the efforts of Protestant missions.

Norwegian Church to get expansion aid: Two new major steps were taken in Oslo to provide additional expansion funds for the (State Lutheran) Church of Norway. The government introduced a bill in Parliament to establish a National Church Fund of 8,000,000 kroner (\$1,120,000), the interest of which would be used for church activity. Meanwhile, the Norwegian Church launched a stewardship campaign, called Christian Action, to raise 1,000,000 kroner (\$140,000) a year.

Evangelical group to aid Hungarian refugees: Dr. Robert Pierce, president of World Vision, Inc., left New York for Vienna to organize emergency aid for children displaced by the anti-Communist revolt in Hungary. Dr. Pierce will furnish funds and personnel to provide food, clothing and medical care for homeless Hungarian youngsters. He will work through Austrian Protestant groups in arranging temporary shelters and hopes to enter Hungary eventually for on-the-spot aid to children there.

MISSIONS

Record number of Protestant missionaries serving abroad: A record total of 23,432 Protestant missionaries are serving abroad for 213 agencies in the United States and Canada, according to a survey made by the Missionary Research Library. The figure four years ago was 18,576. Mission boards with five hundred or more missionaries are: Methodist Church, 1,513; Seventh-Day Adventists, 1,272; Presbyterian Church in U.S.A., 1,072; Southern Baptist Convention, 1,032; Sudan Interior Mission, 1,024; The Christian and Missionary Alliance (November, 1956), 766; Assemblies of God, 752; The Evangelical Alliance Mission, 688; Baptist Mid-Missions, 601; Wycliffe Bible Translators, Inc., 556; National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., 500.

THE PRESS

Reports on Bible distribution by British Society: The British and Foreign Bible Society has distributed more than 624,000,000 Bibles, Testaments and Scripture portions in 836 languages since its formation in 1804. The report was made to the eleventh conference of the Canadian Council of Churches at Kitchener, Ont., Canada, by Rev. A. H. O'Neill, retiring general secretary of the society's Canadian division. He was recently elected Anglican Bishop of Fredericton, N. B. He told the delegates that more than 20,000,000 volumes in 111 languages had been circulated in Canada.

A Spiritual Gift for Christmas

By EARL QUESNELL

Pastor, Alliance Church, Cass Lake, Minn.

What do young people really want? Well-planned AYF meetings? A better social life? Better leadership? More wholesome activity? If so, our goals are inferior.

Seriously, young people, look a little deeper into the desires of your heart. Will the above answer your real needs? I recently observed a group of young people at a youth rally. Their faces were expressionless as they sang, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus,—Sweetest name I know." And, although the rally area included several churches, the attendance was small.

A standard lament in most churches today is "We don't have many young people." There's a reason. Samuel, the boy prophet, was like many of our Christian youth today. He "ministered unto the Lord"; he was set apart for service in the temple, and surely he could be called an Old Testament believer. But something strange is said about him: "Samuel *did not yet know the Lord*, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him."

Let's bring Samuel up to date. He has more zeal for the AYF than most of the young people in the church. He plans programs, follows good suggestions and tries to stir up interest. But when the rest of the crowd shows up they are giddy and

disinterested. Mary reads her poem and giggles half the time. Helen reads the Scripture with little feeling, and Ann prays. The meeting is composed largely of girls. The two fellows who belong to the group are at basketball practice. "Samuel" wishes for something better, but doesn't know what. He has two or three good books on "how to have a thriving youth organization." He has read many of the articles and tried them out. But alas, few gains have been made. After all, who can blame young people for not attending a cut-and-dried meeting? Our high schools can keep young people busy every week night with diverse activities and they don't care for a tasteless religious substitute.

What happened to Samuel in the midst of this problem? You can be sure his work was a cold duty. But then—Samuel heard a Voice. Oh, that many of our young people would hear this Voice! But we're not taught to expect such a personal experience with God. Some say that if you have a spiritual lack in your life you need to read your Bible more, pray more and witness more. But not much is said about how much more. These things are good, but we've worked at them for years with little returns.

Samuel was awakened at *night* by a Voice, and I think it is getting pretty *dark* around our youth today. God wants to break in upon us in these dark days and give us something. Do you know that it is possible to be saved by the grace of God and even participate in church activities and still be as Samuel, to whom the Word of the Lord was not yet revealed?

You ask the question, "How can I know God's voice?" Samuel was taught to expect God's voice. Why don't you begin to expect things from God? And, with this expectancy, start asking. Be definite with the Lord. Admit freely that you

haven't heard His voice but that you want to. It may not be an audible voice; it matters not.

This experience overhauled Samuel. He "grew, and the Lord was with him." Are you growing; are you a better servant of Jesus than you were six months ago? Or are you sort of holding your own against great odds? If the latter is true then you need to hear God's voice. After Samuel heard God speak he became a powerful witness, for God "did let none of his words fall to the ground."

Believe me, young people, you can be filled with the Spirit. You do not need just to be continually believing that you are, without any evidence, like someone chasing a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow but by actually pressing in with determined faith you can have this experience. There's the answer to your youth problem—a supernatural experience with God's Spirit! Tell Him your need and then expect. Your testimony will be contagious. Your business sessions will be cut short by praise and testimonies. Your songs will have life and your prayers will be heard. As for promotion or attendance, be assured that when you catch fire, the flames will draw others.

The Bulletin Board

Youth Rallies

MANSFIELD, OHIO. Grace Gospel Church. Rev. G. J. Bersche, Pontiac, Mich., speaker. January 1, 10:30 A. M. and 2:30 P. M.

LONGVIEW, TEX. Pinewood Church of the C. & M. A. Rev. Keith M. Bailey, American Indian Crusade, Oklahoma City, Okla., speaker. January 19, 10:30 A. M. and 2:30 P. M.

ORDER NOW

The new 1957
AYF PROGRAM CALENDAR
with a

THEME FOR THE MONTH

Watch for write-up next week
from the National Youth Office

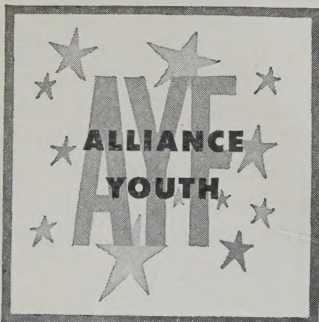
Order from

CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS, INC.

Third and Reily Streets
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Send 50c for cost and mailing

ROBERT E. CUTBIRTH, Editor





A Christmas Long Ago

By MRS. S. G. BARNES, *Argentina*

It was Christmas. The young missionary couple who had been in Argentina only eight months were living in a house that was more like a barn than a dwelling. The floors were made of rough brick with the exception of the kitchen floor; that was of dirt. Odd pieces of second-hand furniture, such as an iron bed, two wicker chairs, one small table and a kerosene box with a cretonne curtain which served as a shoe rack, composed the bedroom furniture. The remaining part of the house was furnished in like manner. In the kitchen there were just a couple of charcoal burners, no cooking stove.

The streets of the town where they lived were not paved. When it rained, which it did very often, the streets would become lakes of muddy water which sometimes remained for weeks.

Nevertheless, the missionary and his wife were extremely happy. The purpose that had brought them so far from home and their loved ones was that of reaching lost men and women for Christ. In that city there was no other gospel witness. The rented hall was filled every Sunday to capacity with men and women hungry for a life they had never found—a life with God. Many were saved. Among those saved was one woman whose business in life was selling young girls to men. When she knelt for prayer a huge, wicked-looking knife protruded from a side pocket of her black skirt. She carried it for self-protection and probably needed it.

The missionaries had a baby girl fifteen months old. The child became so ill that within a week's time there was no hope of saving her life. The new converts would visit the home of the missionaries to encourage them, but on seeing the condition of the little one they would only assent to the fact of approaching death.

Home, loved ones and even Christmas seemed far away. Only the present was real, and it was filled with doubts and fears that gripped the hearts of the missionaries. Heaven, too, seemed closed. Faith and consecration were put to the acid test.

One day when the end seemed only minutes away the missionary and his wife felt led to lay aside all medicine and human aid and to trust God for their child. All alone, the young missionaries took God's Word, read from the fifth chapter of James and anointed their little daughter. Mother and father placed their hands on the inert body of their only child and prayed. The glory of God filled the room. Peace came to the troubled hearts of the parents and health returned to the child. Within hours the baby was on the road to recovery.

It was Christmas of 1920. And it was our first Christmas in a foreign land. We began celebrating by singing: "Praise God, from whom all blessings flow." Real Christmas had come to our home.

Cambodian Youth Respond

By REV. C. E. THOMPSON

Our Cambodian Mission has enlarged the youth program because we feel that the young people are the key with which God may open up the entire country. My wife and I led a month-long youth conference on the Bible school grounds during vacation. Rev. and Mrs. Harry Taylor started this project three years ago and it has grown in numbers and scope year by year.

Not only was God pleased to bless this year's conference with larger attendance, but as these teen-agers applied themselves to the study of the Word, the Holy Spirit began a work in their hearts. We had wonderful services of dedication.

A national youth committee was elected from the group and they immediately took the initiative in service. After the conference they traveled to an outstation where there were young people but no preacher. They stirred up such enthusiasm in the space of a few days that thirty young people joined that local group and laid plans for regular services.

A missionary from another province writes that his young people came back transformed and are enlivening the church. Pray that God will continue to keep His hand on these young people.

There seems to be a new openness to the gospel among the people. This could be God's time for a great harvest in Cambodia.

Leaders of the Cambodian Alliance Youth Fellowship elected at youth conference

C. E. THOMPSON





Coming to Bethlehem from Jerusalem

FRANCES JENKINS OLCOTT

Barricades on the Bethlehem Road

By REV. M. G. GRIEBENOW

BETHLEHEM is within easy hiking distance of Jerusalem, yet in the five years we have lived in the capital of new Israel we have not visited the birthplace of Christ. The boundary between Israel and Jordan may not be freely crossed. Special concessions are made by the governments at Christmas and at Easter, but we have been so occupied at those times that we could not go with the tourists.

Were there no restrictions, the road from Jaffa would be the one we should follow to get onto the Bethlehem road. Ascending toward the city from the coast, the Jaffa road leads through the heart of modern Jerusalem. It passes through Zion

Square, with its many department stores and cinemas. The Generali Building, which houses various government offices, the general post office, the Bank Leumi, the old building of the British and Foreign Bible Society, also Barclay's Bank, all are on this road. Near the latter building barriers block the way. Out of sight beyond "no-man's-land" is the Jaffa Gate in the old city wall of Jerusalem. It is now kept securely closed.

On a beautiful clear day in October we set out to find a vantage point from which we could see Bethlehem. When we reached the barricade on the Jaffa road we turned to the right along a valley

on Princess Mary Road. That led us to a higher part of the city to the south. On this street we passed the beautiful buildings of the Y.M.C.A. and the King David Hotel. Soon we reached a point from which the old city wall and Mount Zion were in plain view. Between us and the old city was the valley of Hinnom (Gehenna). Most of this is "no-man's-land." Across the valley we could see an old, unused road winding down the slope from the closed Jaffa Gate. As we traced its course we discovered that it was actually the old Bethlehem road, and when it ascended the hill on our side the street we were on was a continuation of it.

Here in modern Jerusalem the Bethlehem road becomes one of the well-paved thoroughfares of the city. Walking slowly southward until another barrier blocked our way, we thought of the Wise Men who had followed this very course after they had taken their departure from King Herod and had set out again to find the Child-King. Jacob and his family traveled this road as they returned from the far north country, driving their flocks and herds with them. The place where Rachel gave birth to Benjamin is just out of sight over the hill. The barricade prevented our going as far as her tomb. How sensitive were the prophet's ears who heard the dying Rachel's weeping a thousand years before his time and identified her lament with the inconsolable wailing of mothers who later would mourn the slaying of their infant sons near her grave.

Along the way we had passed the *Ma'abara* (immigrants' camp). What suffering these people have seen, and what still lies ahead for them! Jerusalem has much the same attitude toward God today that it had when Jesus pronounced woes upon its inhabitants and cried, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"

A little farther to the east is the settlement of Talpiot, surrounded with a grove. When we left the trees of that grove behind us we could glimpse a segment of the Dead Sea shimmering in the distance. On a hill toward the Dead Sea stands a large white building, the headquarters of the United Nations for this area. Neither Jew nor Arab is permitted to enter its grounds. It is a strange coincidence that this hill for many years past has been called the "Mount of Evil Counsel."

At length we reached a ridge from which the city of David could be plainly seen. There were no church steeples towering above the houses in David's time nor when Mary and Joseph made the tedious journey from Nazareth in order to be numbered with the people of their home

Rev. M. G. Griebenow went as a missionary to the Tibetans in 1921. When the Communist control of China extended to the Kansu-Tibetan border in 1949, he and Mrs. Griebenow returned to the United States. Early in 1951, they sailed for Israel under appointment to the Jewish work, and have been engaged in service there until the present time.



town. It is not hard to imagine what Bethlehem was like then: farmers' huts clustered along narrow streets, sheepcotes and simple inns where a traveler could be lodged and his mount stabled. Somewhere in the town the military government of imperial Rome would have had its offices.

Parts of a new black-top highway from old Jerusalem through Bethlehem to Hebron are visible from where we stood, but Hebron is hidden from view. That was the site of Jacob's camp when he received news which indicated that Joseph had been killed. The Ishmaelite traders who purchased Joseph from his brothers near Dothan may have passed close to Bethlehem on the way to Egypt. Mary and Joseph would have followed the same route when they fled the wrath of King Herod with their precious charge.

The hills around Jerusalem and Bethlehem are stony and barren. Only the irrigated fields and gardens of the *kibbutz* (collective farm) where we stood were still green, for no rain had fallen since May. The coming of cold weather will be accompanied with rain and possibly a little snow. Sheep grazing at this time of year find only dry but nourishing grass. Upon which of the slopes the shepherds were watching their flock when they heard the angels announce Christ's birth is not at all certain but the name "Shepherd's Field" has been given to one of them.

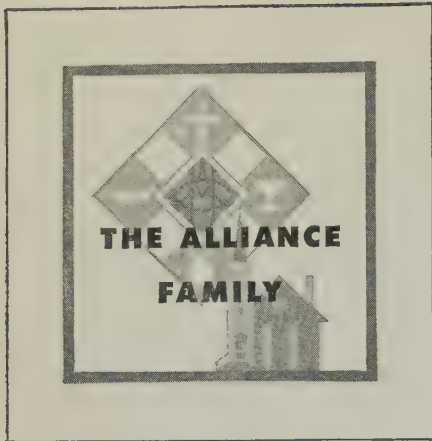
For centuries pilgrims, crusaders and tourists have converged upon the little town of Bethlehem. How few of those who expend time and wealth to view the place where Christ was born have experienced in their hearts the redeeming power of the risen Christ! Taking advantage of the sentimental interest which attracts the crowds, religious

institutions compete with each other for tourist dollars. Particularly is this true at Christmas time. According to reports, most of the inhabitants of Bethlehem derive their income from travelers. Commercialization of places related to spiritual events is of a spirit far removed from the real significance of those events.

We should have liked to meditate longer on this eminence from which we could see distant Bethlehem, but were reminded that only a few days before some archeologists had been suddenly shot down at this very spot. They were searching the newly excavated ruins of ancient dwellings. Tensions and hatred divide the land. The Judean hills over which the angel chorus sang of peace on earth are dotted with fortifications. The very atmosphere bristles with the threat of war.

Strenuously wise and noble men have labored to achieve a settlement between contending racial, national and religious interests on both sides of the boundary which divides old Jerusalem from the modern city. A condition of uneasy truce is the best that has been accomplished. Peace the world gives is only a temporary cessation of hostilities. Peace which the Prince of Peace gives to those who trust Him and obey Him as their Lord is genuine peace.

Infinitely more serious than the roadblocks here in this land are the barricades set up by willful men which bar earth's multitudes from realizing the purpose of the miracle wrought at Bethlehem. Therefore, they continue following their own proud ways, neglecting the path of humble confession. But still there are those who hear Christ's voice above the clamor of this world. To those who seek Him with a broken and a contrite heart, Christ reveals Himself, washing away their sins with His blood. The incarnation of the Son of God is not limited to a geographical site. It is not requisite to our salvation that we should join the seasonal pilgrimages to Bethlehem. It still is gloriously true that "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:12). ♦ ♦ ♦



CLIFFORD E. HARROD, Reporter

News reports may be sent direct to Rev. C. E. Harrod, The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, East and Lane Streets, Raleigh, N. C.

To the Fields

Mrs. Carrie J. Moore left New York December 6, returning to French



Mrs. C. J. Moore
French West Africa

West Africa for her fourth term. She and her husband, the late Raymond R. Moore, first went to the field in 1930. They returned for their third furlough in 1949 and Mr. Moore died in the spring of 1955.

Mrs. Moore's two sons were recently married. Richard and his wife, formerly Eleanor Parhurst, are living in Wheaton, Ill., where Mrs. Moore is finishing her college work. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Moore (nee Frances Johnson), are at Fuller Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

On Furlough

Rev. and Mrs. D. Grant Crooks and children, Cathy and Grant, arrived in New York on November 25 from French West Africa where they have just completed their first term of service. They will be located in Glendale, Calif., for part of their furlough.

Marriages

On November 21, in San Francisco, Calif., Miss Jean G. Godfrey was married to Rev. Herman H. Hazlett, dean of Simpson Bible College. Mrs. Hazlett was formerly secretary to Rev. P. S. Allen, president.

The New Generation

To Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ross Duncan, Conway, N. H., a son, Gordon Ross, Jr., on November 15.

Dr. Turner's Deputation

Because of present political conditions Dr. H. L. Turner is unable to visit Israel en route to his deputational visit in Africa. He will sail from New York on December 29 instead of December 15 (ALLIANCE WEEKLY, December 12) for

Holland, spending a few days with the Alliance fellowship in that country. He and Mrs. Turner, who is accompanying him, will travel to Congo by plane, and later visit our missions in the Gabon and French West Africa also. They will return about the end of March.

Chaplain Rehm Promoted

Chaplain Everett R. Rehm, AUS, was promoted to the rank of Major in October. Chaplain Rehm is attached to the Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco, Calif.

Avenue Road Church Pledges \$47,000 for Missions

The Avenue Road Church of Toronto, Canada, reports the most successful missionary convention in its history, with the annual pledge reaching an all-time high of \$47,000, an increase of \$12,000 over last year.

Rev. Russell Kauffman, of Indianapolis, Ind., presented the Bible basis of missions through the week of convention and was greatly used of God. Missionaries were Rev. and Mrs. G. W. Rose, New Guinea; Rev. Merle Sluyter, Peru; Rev. R. H. Smith, India; Miss Frances Eisensmith, Congo, and Mr. Garth Hunt, missionary candidate to Viet Nam. The Csehy Musical Messengers provided inspiring music for the convention, assisted by the church choir.

Rev. Donald R. Shepson, pastor, writes that the listeners of the church's radio broadcast, Chapel Chimes, underwrote the full support of Rev. and Mrs. K. W. Opperman, of Toronto, missionaries to Peru. For the last six months this congregation has given \$1,000 a week for missions.

Pastor Installed at Brockton, Mass.

Rev. Richard W. Bailey was installed as pastor of the Olivet Memorial Church in Brockton, Mass., at a special service on November 8. Rev. George Decker gave the charge to the congregation, and Rev. E. J. Bailey, District Superintendent, charged the pastor. Rev. Dwight Anderson offered the prayer of consecration. Others taking part were: Roger K. Pratt, Miss Louise Juliano, Rev. William Parrish, Rev. Earl Stewart, Rev. R. L. Stevenson, Alfred Nanfelt and Rev. Wallace Starratt. A reception followed at the Y.W.C.A.

Happenings at Nyack Missionary College

Dr. Harold W. Boon, dean at Nyack Missionary College, was honored recently by the Board of Trustees when they named him vice-president of the seventy-five-year-old school. He succeeds Rev. Harold M. Frelich who retired recently. . . . Young men of the new freshman class were given living quarters in the newly acquired country club building. This acquisition enlarges the campus by nineteen acres. The thirty-room dormitory building has been named Moseley Hall in honor of Dr.

Letters

Symbols Not Needed

When THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY arrives we usually turn to the editorial first. How we thank you for the thoughts so well expressed, week after week, in language clear and understandable.

After reading the recent November 14 issue, we cannot let this pass without saying "Thank you again," especially for the last two paragraphs.

The Scriptures tell us to worship God in spirit and in truth; hence we need no visible reminder or symbolic object when the Lord Jesus dwells in our hearts!—Mrs. CHRISTINE HUBER, Tuckahoe, N. Y.

The Judgment and God

As is the case with most ministers, I suppose, there are so many items that come to my desk that I very often must limit myself only to scanning many of the articles and periodicals. However, I always carefully read your editorials, for I have found, even while not agreeing totally with your views, you have a way of stimulating thought.

Your editorial of November 14, 1956, is now before me. In this article you deal with superstition, and in the course of your comments you write: "Some persons also think of God as being vindictive, churlish and quick to take vengeance . . ."

I heartily agree with your views concerning superstition. I would, however, appreciate greatly your views concerning the final judgment of God. I have a deep-rooted feeling that there runs through the "traditional" Christian belief concerning the judgment that same sort of thinking that makes of God something of an ogre who stands before a terrified soul and gleefully (almost) says, "I told you so. Now you'll get what's coming to you!"

I have the feeling that the judgment is another of God's gifts of mercy to His children; that it is not here that He hauls us before a court to see whether or not we are *bad* enough to go to hell (this we would undoubtedly be!), but rather that the judgment is a way for Christ to take us by the hand after death as He has before to lead us through to God's eternal reward. We stand, already, under the judgment of death without Him!

I must take issue, however, with your view concerning crosses and other such objects in churches as being a "sure way back to formalism and death." The fault lies not in having the objects, but the use to which we put them. With proper emphasis upon the meaning of The Cross, altar crosses may serve as a reminder of the Life given upon a cross. Without this emphasis, it indeed becomes a useless gadget and a "poor substitute."—REV. C. A. MANGHAM, The First Methodist Church, Valley Mills, Tex.

Thomas Moseley, president of the school for sixteen years. . . . Stanley Tamm

(Continued on page 15)

THE ALLIANCE WEEKLY

Sunday

DAILY READING—Genesis 22:1-14.

DAILY TEXT—*"Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me"* (verse 12).

Human love gives its rewards capriciously. . . . But God loves on principle, and His caresses are always given for something. It is when we obey Him, when we please Him, when we stand fast in some place of testing, when we sacrifice some selfish thing at His bidding—it is then we hear the sweet words, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: . . . enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Like a loving mother He takes up His child in His tender embrace and lavishes upon him the fullness of His affection. It was when Abraham had proved his fidelity by the sacrifice of his son that God met him with the sweet testimony, "Now I know that thou lovest (Me), seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." This is what Jesus meant in these wonderful words: "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." This is something more than He says to the ordinary Christian. This is His special love for the always obedient heart.—A. B. SIMPSON.

Monday

DAILY READING—Luke 12:15-21.

DAILY TEXT—*"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth"* (verse 15).

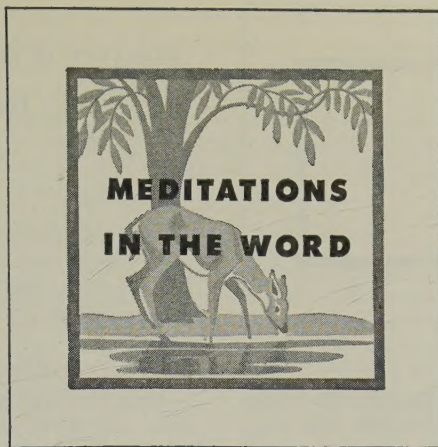
Years ago in a little English sea-coast town there appeared a sailor, old, worn-out and with little worldly goods. His neighbors had nice homes, families and security. He had spent all the years of his life at sea. One of the villagers approached him and said, "You don't have much to show for your years in the Navy." "No," he replied slowly, "maybe I don't. But I have served and sailed with the greatest admiral that ever sailed the seven seas—Sir Francis Drake." When life is over, no matter what we have of worldly goods or material possessions or human fame we can say from our hearts, "We sailed with the greatest Captain who ever sailed the sea of life—Jesus Christ—our Lord, our Master, our Saviour and our coming King."—RUSSELL V. DELONG.

Tuesday

DAILY READING—John 3:14-21.

DAILY TEXT—*"He gave his only begotten Son"* (verse 16).

God gave to the fullest and utmost of His ability to give when He "gave his only begotten Son." No greater gift could have been made than that which He did make. There was no withholding or scintilla of reservation in the gift which God made. . . .



Compiled by EDITH M. BEYERLE

Since God gave all for you, what is your gift for God? God gave all for you, that you might give all for God. This is only a reasonable thing in the light of God's unspeakable gift in Jesus Christ. Christmas giving attains the highest spiritual levels only when we give our all to God in unreserved surrender and in entire consecration. This gift of complete and unreserved consecration, accompanied by faith in the sanctifying merits of the shed blood of Christ, enables us to go forth "conquering, and to conquer."—THE HERALD.

Wednesday

DAILY READING—Mark 14:43-52.

DAILY TEXT—*"They all forsook him and fled"* (verse 50).

*Not for us the praise to take;
Not for us the vaunt to make,
Always loyal to have been,
Ever faithful, quick and keen
As our Lord's disciples.*

*Not for us the boast to make
That our Lord we'll ne'er forsake,
Since that Peter, when assailed
By the Tempter, wholly failed
As his Lord's disciple.*

*But for us a steadfast hope
In the One whose power can cope
With our weakness, and bestow
Strength to make us, here below,
Loyal, true disciples.*

—SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES.

Thursday

DAILY READING—2 Timothy 2:1-10.

DAILY TEXT—*"If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully"* (verse 5).

All service must be prompted by right motives. It is not so much how the work appears outwardly that commends it to God—in this His judgment is given differently from that of man; but it is altogether a question as to what, back of it all, prompted the service. The giving of the widow's mite with its hearty acceptance by our Master is an illustration of this fact, for in the desire that prompted the gift

was found that which was of ten thousand times more value than the gift itself. One might preach the gospel and win hundreds of souls for Christ, yet the motives that prompted the preaching be wrong. One might . . . be a teacher of acknowledged ability . . . and yet miserably fail at the great day of awards to receive one single crown for faithfulness—simply because the work was born in selfishness and carried on in pride.—J. WILBUR CHAPMAN.

Friday

DAILY READING—Isaiah 30:15-33.

DAILY TEXT—*"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left"* (verse 21).

This is a very blessed and reassuring word to the timorous, tremulous and conscientious person who is constantly fearful lest he miss the Lord's directive will; lest for a short space, because of some sharp turn in the road, the Shepherd is lost sight of, or because of a multitude of other voices His voice is deadened; or perhaps because the sheep has lingered too long in some green pasture and has failed to follow (cf. John 10:27). Whatever may be the cause that might turn a child of God out of the path of his Guide, God has safeguarded it by the assurance that He will not leave him to himself to find his way. If or when he steps aside into some bypath, God has promised to call him back with the word, "This is the way, walk ye in it." After all, our safe arrival Home means much to Him, as do also our service and our behavior en route.—PAMELL.

Saturday

DAILY READING—Hebrews 10:14-25.

DAILY TEXT—*"He is faithful that promised"* (verse 23).

Are we taking God's promises at their full worth and in all faithfulness looking to Him for daily guidance and strength? When we have once committed our life and our way to the Lord it would be a faithless act to withdraw ourselves from our heavenly Father's keeping. If He is to accomplish His full pleasure through us, we need to be constantly in touch with Him and under His guidance. We are to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (Psa. 37:7). Our soul must be in complete and perfect adjustment to the will of God in order that His Spirit may communicate to us the divine messages of life. The slightest dust of worldliness, the least impurity or selfishness will break the spiritual current between our hearts and His. It is blessedly true: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31).—SELECTED.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON—DECEMBER 30, 1956

The New Heaven and Earth

Revelation 21:1-8, 22-27

GOLDEN TEXT

"Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, . . . there shall be no more death, . . . for the former things are passed away."—REVELATION 21:3, 4.

BACKGROUND AND LESSON ORIENTATION

The Revelation is the book of ultimate triumph. It is the Christian's assurance that no matter how bitterly evil may rage against right, right will prevail. That the gates of hell will not prevail against the Church of Christ is, after all, the satisfaction of being a Christian soldier. In this book the conflict of the ages comes to its deadly final battle. Whatever skirmishes may have been lost, the final battle is ours. To be more explicit, this is the unveiling of the triumph of Jesus Christ over the enemies of God. Although we do not now see all things under His feet, we see Him who is declared the victor. In the end we shall see Him in majesty and honor. We shall know that it was His victory, not ours. Our share in it will be because we are members of His glorious Body, the Church triumphant. With John we say, "Even so, come quickly!"

SIMPLIFIED OUTLINE

1. *The New Order*—Revelation 21:1-4.
2. *The Finished Work*—Revelation 21:5-8.
3. *The Perfect Day*—Revelation 21:22-27.

KEY WORD ANALYSIS

(1) "Adorned"—*kekosmemenen* (21:2), from *kosmeo* (noun, *kosmos*). The significant relation between *kosmos*, which is the harmonious order or world system, and *kosmeo*, meaning to arrange or to put in order, has been lost in the use to which we have put the term "cosmetics." The picture here is

the city of God adorned as the place Christ has prepared for His own. Compare chapter 19:7 for the adornment of the Bride for this union.

(2) "Liars"—*pseudesin* (21:8), false ones. The emphasis upon "false" here is not so much upon the lie as the liar or hypocrite in life. The day declares the sort of person a man has become.

COMMENTARY ON THE PRINTED TEXT

1. *The New Order* (Rev. 21:1-4).

The initial picture of this chapter is a dramatic change of scenes. The reader is transported into a new order—an order which has never been nor ever will be until God gives the word. As the first heaven and the first earth were brought into existence by a word from God (Gen. 1:1, ff.), as the new order was brought about after the deluge by a word from God (2 Pet. 3:5, 7), just so will this order issue at God's word in God's own time. God will create a new dwelling place designed as a proper environ for a new order of things. All of the bitter consequences of sin and wickedness in man shall be done away. True peace will reign.

2. *The Finished Work* (Rev. 21:5-8).

However, this is not emphatically the creation of a new order only; it is the consummation of the great work of redemption. God has finished what He set out to do (see Isa. 66:22). Thus there is something finished as well as

something begun. Compare "I make all things new" (v. 5) with "It is done" (v. 6). Christ is thus the Alpha and the Omega, the Author and Finisher. Having consummated redemption by gathering together all things in one in Christ (Eph. 1:10), God now takes the redeemed of earth and begins a new era.

Thirst is a thing of the past. Here we see the fulfillment of the fourth beatitude. The predicated satisfaction is now reality. Hope has been realized. Eternal fellowship is now effected.

The only negative note is in verse 8. The material which could not (or would not) be conformed to what God wanted and decreed must be consigned to the trash pile of the universe. Be not deceived; God is not mocked.

3. *The Perfect Day* (Rev. 21:22-27).

The Hebrew poet sang of the "path of the just" man. He called it a shining pathway that grew brighter and brighter until the dawning of a day when man would enjoy an age in which there would be no sunset. This was a graphic

and beautiful figure to describe the expansive quality of God's redemptive work. It is not too optimistic. What if it did lead through dark valleys? They only enhanced the brightness which shone on the path on the other side of the darkness.

In this age there will be no ritual. Worship will be personal and direct. Created light gives way to the effulgence of the glory of the Father of lights. There will be no rebellions. There will be no narrow nationalisms. There will be no faction. There will be no dark political intrigue. There will be no gatekeeper. There will be no restricted zone. There will be no war. There will be no curfews.

Everything is now perfect, complete, and what is more, it is eternally so. One day lived like this will be worth all the struggle of the soul, all the discipline of spirit that it may take to make it a personal reality. Perhaps it is the worth of it that made Jesus say "the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12).

HELPFUL HINTS FOR LESSON PREPARATION

(1) This lesson takes on tremendous possibilities as a New Year's challenge in a world of terrible chaos and confusion. Lead the class in a quest for spiritual reality. Reality is

nothing more than truth in Christ. The abiding aspect of the eternal is reality. (2) The divine revelation of heaven is not the technical language of theology; it is the warm simplicity of language comprehensible by all.

THE ALLIANCE FAMILY

(Continued from page 12)

well-known Christian businessman of Lima, Ohio, conducted a three-day devotional series recently, bringing challenging and practical messages. The second day was set aside as a day of prayer. . . . Haydn's oratorio, *The Creation*, was presented recently to a receptive and appreciative audience. Dr. Lee Olson directed the sixty-voice choir accompanied by Miss Lillian Wilson, pianist, and Harold Best, organist. Soloists included Miss Marion Howe, soprano, and James Rhodes, tenor. Guest soloist was Raymond McAfee, noted basso of Chicago, Ill. . . . The Carol and Candlelight program on December 10, followed by Handel's *The Messiah* on December 13 marked the Christmas season.

Lockport (N. Y.) Services Fruitful

Rev. L. J. Pyne conducted a successful series of evangelistic services in The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church of Lockport, N. Y., November 7 to 18, with several persons professing salvation, backsliders returning to God and believers being filled with the Holy Spirit. Writes the pastor, Rev. Nolan J. Brisco, "The general spiritual tone of the church was helped by the meetings and on the closing night eleven believers followed the Lord in baptism."

Cranford Church Reaches Highest Pledge

The Cranford (N. J.) Alliance Church climaxed its recent missionary convention with the highest pledge in its history—\$26,592. Dr. George A. Aitchison, pastor, writes that last year's pledge of \$22,118 was overpaid by more than \$500. This is considered remarkable due to the heavy financial obligation on the new educational building.

Missionaries who participated in the convention were: Miss Myra Wing, India; Miss Irene Hearn, Thailand; Mr. Raymond Stumpf, Japan, and Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Stebbins, missionary appointees to Viet Nam.

Prayer Is Key to Revival in Wellsville, N. Y.

"I believe prayer is the key," writes Rev. Sidney O. Harris, pastor of The Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, Wellsville, N. Y., in reporting the unusual blessing of God during recent revival meetings held by Rev. Hamilton Rankin. The two-week gospel crusade was preceded by two weeks of daily prayer meetings, held at 6:15 A. M. and 1:30 P. M. A spirit of prayer came upon those who gathered and many testified that God met them during these times of prayer, which continued through the campaign. "Because we are still praying and believing, we have not seen the end of the results of these meetings," says Mr. Harris.

Approximately sixty persons were dealt with at the altar. Four confessed

Christ as Saviour, several backsliders testified to being reclaimed, some came for physical healing and still others came forward to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Several have expressed a desire to continue the early morning prayer watch at 6:15 and it will be held on Tuesdays and Fridays.

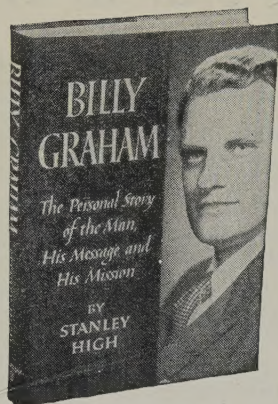
Philadelphia Church Dedicated

The Kensington Gospel Tabernacle, Philadelphia, Pa., recently dedicated its new building at Indiana Avenue and Goudinot Street. Rev. J. W. McGarvey, District Superintendent, preached the dedicatory sermon. The church was started in 1915 through the ministry of Miss Anna Hershey. Rev. A. E. Cummins has been pastor since 1946.



Obedience costs the human spirit a higher price than any other virtue.—JEAN NICOLAS GROU.

● Kindly add 15c for postage, handling and insurance when orders are less than \$3.00, and 5c for each additional dollar or fraction thereof. ●



BILLY GRAHAM

The Personal Story of the Man, His Message and His Mission

By Stanley High

Senior Editor, Reader's Digest

What manner of man is this handsome revivalist who has preached face to face to more spiritually-hungry millions than any other Christian evangelist? In this frank and objective biography, Stanley High tells the dramatic story of how, against great odds, Billy Graham became a preacher; together with detailed accounts of his fabulous Crusades, moving personal testimonies from converts, criticism from opponents, home life anecdotes—combining to create the first complete portrait of this amazing religious phenomenon of our time. . . . \$3.95

Order from either house
CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Third and Reily Streets
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

WILLIAM H. DIETZ, INC.
10 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago 3, Illinois

DIETZ INDIVIDUAL COMMUNION SERVICE

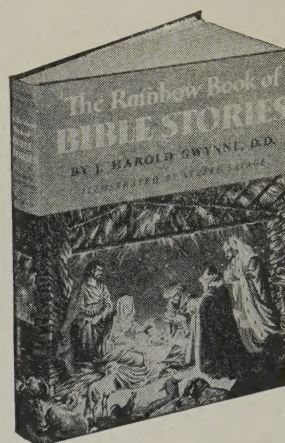
This popular, noiseless Communion Service is again available. Interlocking trays stack into a convenient, attractive unit of desired capacity. Glasses in straight rows are rubber cushioned and do not click, stick, tilt or spill. Made of finest aluminum, satin finish.

Delivery extra on following prices:
Base, only \$4.75
Cover, only 5.75

No. 7 Cushioned Tray with 36 glasses, only \$13.95
No. 55 Extra Crystal Glasses for tray No. 7 1 1/2 in. high. Per dozen 1.25
No. 4 Wide Rim Bread Plate aluminum 10 1/2 in. 2.95
No. 5 Offering Plate aluminum, 10 1/2 in. 3.50
Your dealer will supply you, order today
For free catalog write Dept. 000.



WM. H. DIETZ, INC.
10 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago 3, Ill.



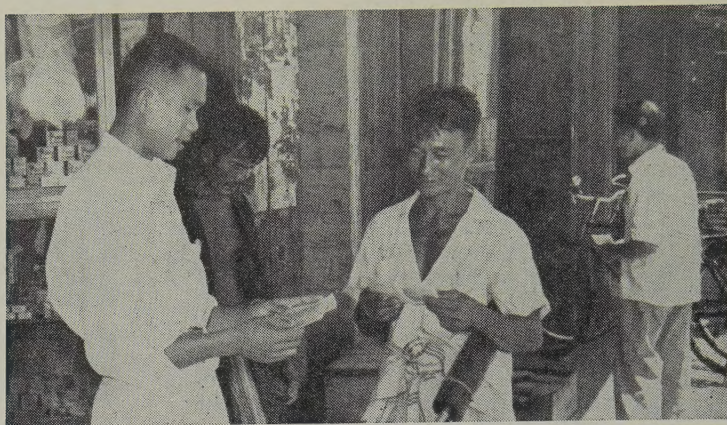
The Rainbow Book of BIBLE STORIES

By J. Harold Gwynne, D.D.

Over 100 of the best loved and most familiar of the Old and New Testament stories reverently and simply told, for the most part in the language of the Bible itself. Here are the patriarchs and prophets, the kings and heroes, the valiant men and women of the Old Testament—stories rich in the wisdom of centuries of human experience, telling how the Chosen People kept their covenant with the Lord. Here, too, are the people we know intimately from the Gospels—those who shared the life and death of the Messiah. Dr. Gwynne has combined the 4 gospels in a single flowing narrative of the life and teachings of Jesus into which the familiar parables are woven. He has continued through the book of Acts with vivid portrayals of the 12 apostles and the early church fathers, making clear their rolls in the history of Christianity. This is a rich and handsome volume with over 100 full and half-page illustrations, most of them in full color. 320 pages, 8 1/4 by 11 inches. For ages 10 and up. . . . \$4.95

Order from either house
CHRISTIAN PUBLICATIONS, INC.
Third and Reily Streets
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

WILLIAM H. DIETZ, INC.
10 South Wabash Avenue
Chicago 3, Illinois



W. D. CARLSEN

A Thai Bible school student gives Scripture portion to villager

Christ's Star in Thailand

STUDENTS attending short term Bible schools in Thailand come with the same question the Wise Men asked long ago, "Where is He . . . ?"

The Wise Men were guided by a star. They made a detour which was almost fatal to their quest, but at length they found the Child and worshiped Him, presenting to Him their treasures.

In almost every case Thai who come to study the Word of God have been started in their search for Christ by what they have seen in some lone star—a Thai Christian or a missionary has been to them a light in the darkness. Resolutely they have determined to find the One of whom they have had a glimpse in the life of a disciple.

Before they reach the places where classes are held, they may detour more than once. Relatives and fellow villagers advise them to seek satisfaction for their longings at some ornate temple or famous shrine. Cunning deceptions are employed to fill them with doubts as to the objectives of those who have come to teach of Christ.

There is nothing impressive about the meeting places. None of the pomp or glittering pageantry of idolatry is even suggested by the rough shelters and crude furnishings. But there is the warmth of Christian love as precious truths are taught.

Some of the people come with questions but later open their hearts to Christ, offering themselves to Him. The way by which they then return to their homes is different from the way they came. Their feet have been turned from walking in the paths of sin to walk in a new and a living way opened to them by the Saviour's sacrifice.

Prayer for Bible teaching ministries of this kind in the villages gives intensity to the light and strengthens seekers in their quest.

THE CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE

260 West 44th St., New York 36, N. Y. 61 Glenvale Blvd., Toronto 17, Ont., Can.